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General Assembly
Tenth Emergency Special Session

Official Records

5th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 15 July 1997, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Razali Ismail ..... (Malaysia)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 5 (*continued*)

Illegal Israeli actions in occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Report of the Secretary-General (A/ES-10/6 and Corr.1 and Add.1)

Draft resolution (A/ES-10/L.2)

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*interpretation from Arabic*): I wish at the outset to state that my delegation supports the statement made this morning by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Arab Group. That representative rightly noted the solidarity of the Arabs on this very serious situation. In my statement, I shall focus on a few of the major points that are especially worth highlighting.

The General Assembly has resumed the tenth emergency special session, because the Israelis have refused to recognize resolution ES-10/2 of 25 April 1997 and have rejected the international community's position on Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Having read the excellent report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories, we consider that the report merits high praise and appreciation for the valuable information and apt comments it contains. The report makes crystal clear Israel's intransigence with regard to the resolutions and appeals of the international community, as exemplified most explicitly by the position of the Israeli Administration towards the Secretary-General's proposed dispatch of a Special Envoy to the region to gather facts and first-hand information on the situation there. Not only did Israel refuse to permit the Envoy to work on the basis of the General Assembly resolution, it sought to impose on the United Nations a different framework for his mission, thus defying the collective will of the entire international community.

The report of the Secretary-General contains several paragraphs describing the deplorable situation in the occupied Palestinian territories, and observing that the Israeli Administration is solely responsible for the fact that the peace process is now faltering. We would cite as examples the paragraphs describing the continued construction of the Jebel Abu Ghneim settlement, the expansion of other settlements in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the confiscation of lands, the economic blockade, the arbitrary administrative measures taken against Arab Jerusalemites, the rejection of the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention, of 1949, all the actions taken against human rights, the continued illegal detentions, and the provocations by Jewish settlers against the Arab population.

A substantial section of the report is devoted to the Israeli redeployment from some of the occupied territories, which is, however, not at the level defined by the Oslo accords; this refutes Israel's claims that it is implementing all the provisions of the accords. Every

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day, therefore, we read that there is confrontation between unarmed Palestinian civilians and the Israeli forces of occupation. This has led to many injuries and deaths. This situation will not be brought under control so long as Israel continues to engage in provocative practices, to seize land by force and to attack and desecrate religious shrines and sanctuaries.

The situation in occupied Palestine and in the Middle East in general does not augur well for the future. Since the present Israeli Administration came to power, the peace process has been deteriorating ever more quickly. That Administration has reneged on all the commitments and agreements that Israel entered into with the Palestinian Authority and with neighbouring Arab countries. Moreover, it has defied the very basis of the peace process, first and foremost the formula of land for peace that was endorsed at the Madrid Conference and in the Oslo accords.

The report of the Secretary-General clearly reflects this and sketches the Israeli vision of the peace process by means of describing the communications the Secretary-General received from Israel when he proposed to dispatch a Special Envoy to the region. The peace process has lost its real meaning when one of the principal parties is working hard, in the full view of the world, to undermine the foundations of peace. In this way, the hope that shone on the horizon when the peace process was launched through the 1991 Madrid Conference is gradually dwindling, and is being replaced by suspicion, disappointment and mistrust in the region and among all the world's peace-loving countries and peoples, which constantly aspire to just and lasting peace and to maintain the security and stability of the region.

Yet again the international community must shoulder its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security by imposing respect for international legitimacy and adherence to international law upon any party that destabilizes the world, and by defusing the potential threat of war in the Middle East. It is now time for the international community to move from sterile condemnations to genuine pressure, until the principles of international law are respected and, in particular, until the resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly are implemented. Notable among these resolutions is resolution ES-10/2, adopted at the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Olhaye (Djibouti): The call for a resumption of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly to consider Israel's continued and expanding illegal occupation of the Palestinian territory — in particular the latest land confiscation and settlement activity in Jebel Abu Ghneim in East Jerusalem — has clearly been inevitable. The rising temperature of hostility throughout the area has been ominous, a reverse reflection of the dwindling prospects for the peace process. As an occupied people whose options are very limited, the Palestinians have nowhere to turn to but to the United Nations for justice and relief until this body's unanimous resolutions are heeded, respected and implemented by Israel.

Resolution ES-10/2 of 25 April 1997, expressing the overwhelming consensus of the General Assembly, demanded in particular the immediate and full cessation of the construction of a new settlement at Jebel Abu Ghneim, to the south of occupied East Jerusalem, and of all other Israeli settlement activities, which are illegal and in direct contravention of the peace agreement. The resolution also requested the Secretary-General to examine Israel's compliance with the resolution's provisions and to report back on the situation, which he did in his report in document A/ES-10/6, which in essence details how Israel subjected the mission to unacceptable conditions. The bottom line is that, yet again, there has been no compliance by Israel with ES-10/2.

Obviously, this can only be seen as a policy designed, as the report notes,

> "to alter the character, legal status and demographic composition of Jerusalem." (*A/ES-10/6, para. 20*)

What are we to make of the facts on the ground brought about by these illegal activities? We all agree that such moves seriously prejudice and undermine the final status negotiations. Jebel Abu Ghneim is correctly seen by the report

> "to represent, in the view of the Palestinian people, the largest single negative factor in the breakdown of the peace process and the fomenting of unrest" (*ibid. para. 15 (e)*)

in the region.

The Secretary-General's report represents, therefore, a damning indictment of Israel, its non-compliance with the demands of ES-10/2 and its broader intransigence in refusing to cooperate to resolve the situation in the

occupied territories in accordance with resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and consistent with the principles of the Oslo Accords.

Consequently, the draft resolution we are considering today would appear in this light to represent the least that could reasonably be demanded of the General Assembly. Israel's demonstrated lack of cooperation with the proposed mission of the Secretary-General is tantamount to an outright rejection of the United Nations mandate on Palestinian issues, in particular, and on the Arab-Israeli conflict, in general. There would seem to be no other alternative to this draft, which simply reiterates the demand of the previous resolution that all construction activity cease and that all actions taken illegally against Palestinian Jerusalemites and their natural rights, contrary to international law, be reversed.

Israel needs to appreciate the seriousness and sincerity which the Arab world and the international community as a whole confer on the issues of justice, peace and fairness in Palestine. The relentless confiscation of both Palestinian land and rights is causing unprecedented despair and dismay and, as expected, has ignited violence, resulting in deaths, bloodshed and property destruction. In such a hopeless scenario, the recommendation that a conference be convened by the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention on measures to enforce the Convention in occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, is both a necessity and timely.

We are very much concerned about the basic humanitarian and legal rights of the Palestinian people and about peace and security in the area. The two are but opposite sides of the same coin. The path to both were laid down in Madrid, Oslo and Washington and in subsequent talks between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

There is not a single State in the world today except Israel which advocates continued Israeli occupation and settlement activities in Palestine. Such activities have invariably been universally condemned. The Palestinian people, therefore, are crying out for their legitimate rights, for the restoration of their territory and for peace and security in the area. With great pain and sacrifice, guidelines for a peace process were agreed upon and the principles of land for peace, in accordance with resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), were accepted. Certainly, this was the message that was reaffirmed in the General Assembly vote of 25 April 1997.

Despite Israel's obfuscations and persistent stalling, there still remains a genuine desire for peace in the Arab world and on the part of the international community, a willingness to re-inject momentum into the tortured, fragmentary process. But is there such a thing as an interminable desire for peace at any price? The frustration fed by Israeli policies and injustices is reaching critical mass. Whether we like it or not, Jebel Abu Ghneim has become a symbol of Arab frustration with an abysmal process that is continuously abused — that has, in fact, ran out of steam and is not going anywhere. No peace process could move forward or even survive when one of the parties is still intensely engaged in rewriting it, reversing, as it were, the course of events. That kind of peace, if it in any way deserves to be called peace, cannot be sustained.

In addressing the United States Senate on 22 January 1917 on essential terms of peace in Europe, President Woodrow Wilson had this to say about what peace is all about:

> "Only a peace between equals can last. Only a peace the very principle of which is equality and a common participation in a common benefit."

Let us hope that reason finally will also prevail in the Middle East.

Mr. Abu-Nimah (Jordan) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to thank you, Sir, on your decision to convene this resumed emergency special session, which was opened in April to consider the illegal Israeli actions in occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the occupied Palestinian territories and adopted resolution ES-10/2 on 25 April 1997.

I cannot fail to convey the thanks and deep appreciation of my delegation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his comprehensive and objective report of 26 June 1997 in document A/ES-10/6. The General Assembly resumed its special session today on the basis of the contents of that report.

The delegations that participated in the last session — with whom we also expressed our deep concern over the ongoing Israeli settlement activities on Arab land in Palestine — warned of the serious implications of this policy for the peace process and the inalienable and legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. These rights have been systematically and continuously violated. The Assembly expressed its disapproval of this

Israeli policy by adopting, for the second time in the space of a few months, a resolution condemning the Israeli settlement policy and settler plan in southern Jerusalem and on Jebel Abu Ghneim. The Assembly also called on Israel to cease its settlement activity and halt construction on Jebel Abu Ghneim.

Israel has failed to respond to the will of the international community and has disregarded the relevant United Nations resolutions, as is clear from the report of the Secretary-General. It has refused to heed the efforts made by Arab, European and international groups in recent months to convince it to halt construction on Jebel Abu Ghneim, in order to enable the peace process to continue and thereby bring about the desired safe and secure future for the countries of the region. Israel's failure to respond has aggravated tensions in our area, returning it to the state of hostility, conflict and lack of confidence that prevailed in the decades preceding the peace process.

The bloody conflicts and the plight of the Palestinian people are crystal-clear evidence of the deterioration of the security, political, economic and human conditions as well as of the prevalence of despair, bitterness and frustration among the people, whose hopes were revived by the peace process.

The report of the Secretary-General mentions that Israeli settlement activity continues unabated, including the expansion of existing settlements, the building of bypass roads and confiscation of land adjacent to the settlements throughout the occupied Arab territories.

The report of the Secretary-General notes that the Jebel Abu Ghneim incident has serious implications for a number of reasons, political, geographic, demographic and economic. Politically, it is the first move to construct an entirely new settlement on occupied Palestinian lands since a freeze was imposed on such activities by the previous Israeli Government in the context of the peace process. The report goes on to say that such a move prejudices final status negotiations and closes the door on what Palestinians expect to be the future capital of a Palestinian state — East Jerusalem.

The report also states that geographically, Abu Ghneim represents the final link in a chain of settlements constructed by Israel around occupied East Jerusalem. Already existing links in the chain are formed by other settlements, and the closing of this chain would be a final step towards the isolation of Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank. This is part and parcel of Israel's declared plan fully to incorporate occupied East Jerusalem as part of the "unified eternal capital of the State of Israel".

This move also poses serious economic risks. Demographically, these risks include Israel's intention to transfer some 50,000 Jewish settlers into the predominantly Arab area of occupied East Jerusalem, further coercively altering the demographic, ethnic and religious character of occupied East Jerusalem. The report mentions on several occasions the continuation of Israel's settlement policy throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip, including the seizing of more than 30,000 dunums of land in the West Bank for the expansion of settlements. It notes that the confiscations took place in Hebron, Jerusalem and the Jordan Valley.

The report also touches on Israeli policies and practices aimed at changing the character of Jerusalem and its demographic and legal character, foremost of which is revoking the residency rights of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the confiscation of identity cards from the Arab inhabitants of Jerusalem, which deprives them of their natural entry rights for purposes of health care, school access and religious worship.

The report states that the above administrative practices apply only to Arab inhabitants in Jerusalem. The report amply describes the Secretary-General's attempt to negotiate with Israel by sending an international envoy and the failure of that attempt because of the impossible restrictions placed by Israel on his mission. It also notes Israel's refusal to apply the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 to all the territories occupied since 1967 and its failure to observe its commitment within the framework of the Oslo accords, as well as the arbitrary, coercive actions taken against the Arabs. These include administrative detention, mass punishment, the demolition of their homes, curfew, the transfer of Bedouin populations, and restricting the movement of inhabitants from the north to the south of the country through Jerusalem. These are just some of the examples cited in the report of the Secretary-General regarding Israel's failure to comply with international resolutions and the deteriorating situation in the occupied territories, which are increasingly posing direct risks to the peace process at large.

We in Jordan are seriously concerned about the deterioration of the situation and about Israel's lack of response to the goodwill efforts made to get the peace process moving again, which could sabotage the whole thing. We feel that the peace which we are trying to

achieve does not serve the interest of one side to the detriment of the other. This is the peace that Israel and the Israelis need, as do the others in the region. Reliance on force will not achieve security, nor does it serve the interests of coexistence, prosperity, legitimacy, justice and rationality in the region. It can lead only to a climate of conflict and distrust, which we thought we had left behind once and for all when we entered on the peace process.

We call on Israel, through the Assembly, to reconsider its policy and to assess objectively and responsibly the implications of such a policy of intransigence and prevarication in the area, including for Israel itself. We in Jordan will not allow such obstacles to affect our commitment to a just, lasting and comprehensive peace for all the peoples of the region, but we realize clearly that our commitment, the Palestinian commitment and the Arab commitment cannot be translated into reality without a commitment on the part of Israel to its obligations requiring political will, integrity, transparency, responsibility and a sense of justice and a fair recognition of the rights and interest of others.

Therefore we appeal to the Assembly, which represents the will of the international community, to intensify its efforts in order to overcome the obstacles that stand in the way of peace. We also appeal to the sponsors of the peace process, the States of the European Union and to other groups to continue their efforts and to focus them on this noble objective. My delegation reaffirms that the peace option is the only option open to us. Any alternative — God forbid — would embroil the area in conflict and violence, and we all have a responsibility to prevent that.

We need to reconsider the peace process comprehensively in order to set it again on the right course, on the basis of the Madrid process, of international legitimacy, of General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, especially resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), as well as on the basis of the principle of land for peace, which means the return of the Arab territories occupied since 1967, in order to achieve further progress on all tracks — between Palestine, Syria and Lebanon and Israel — and in order to achieve the comprehensive, just and lasting peace we desire for the region.

Mr. Saliba (Malta): In the first place, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this resumption of the emergency special session of the General Assembly.

It is unfortunate that the emergency special session has to be resumed due to the action of one Member State that goes against the will of the international community. The obstacles put in the path of the Secretary-General, as detailed in his report, definitely do not contribute to the achievement of his objectives, or those the United Nations has set for itself.

The issue of the settlements at Jebel Abu Ghneim has been at the centre of our attention since the beginning of this year. Events on the ground continue to evolve and have taken a turn which threatens to move the region of the Middle East away from peace and into further conflict and mistrust.

On all previous occasions, both in the Security Council and in this very Assembly, Member States have pronounced themselves on the issues. Repeated calls have been made for a restoration of the peace process, and demands have been made for respect of agreements and accords. More relevant has been the underlying desire of the international community to see respect for the principles which govern international legality and guarantee peace and security.

The General Assembly mandated the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the prevailing situation on the ground. This mandate was the product of the desire of the international community to give impetus to a process which has been threatened by the building of settlements and other actions which contravene the letter and the spirit of agreements reached and resolutions adopted. The great efforts of the Secretary-General to prepare a report by sending a Special Envoy to the region have been thwarted.

The report of the Secretary-General under consideration today raises grave concerns. Of paramount importance are the indicators given by the Secretary-General of the political, geographical, demographic and economic implications of the refusal of Israel to abandon its construction of a new settlement in Jebel Abu Ghneim. It is within this context that the question of the building of settlements should be viewed by the General Assembly.

Other issues of concern raised by the Secretary-General include the question of the revoking of the residency rights of Palestinians in Jerusalem, the non-acceptance by Israel of the *de jure* applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention, the repeated and prolonged

closures and the continued administrative detention of Palestinians in Israeli jails.

Such actions and events have had an impact on the mutual trust which had been so laboriously built up over recent years. Violence is slowly fracturing the edifice of peace, which has been built with so much pain and effort. The call for restraint is quietly fading into a murmur which has been drowned by the clamour of frustration.

Malta joins the international community in once again calling upon Israel to cease the building of settlements and other activities which seek to alter the character, legal status and demographic composition of Jerusalem and which reverse the peace process.

Malta appeals to Israel to come back on the track outlined in the peace process — a track which makes full use of preventive diplomacy and confidence-building measures, rather than pique and unilateral measures.

Malta also recommends that Israel cooperate fully with the Secretary-General and accord full facilities for a Special Envoy whose task could be simply to report facts as they are, and thus help in the formulation of sound decisions based not on hearsay or prejudiced interpretations, but on the truth.

Mr. Ould Dedach (Mauritania) *(interpretation from Arabic):* At the outset I would like to express to you, Mr. President, and to your friendly country our appreciation and respect, as well as our confidence in your personal qualities and your great expertise, which, we are sure, will have a positive impact on the work of this session.

I would also like to express our thanks to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his dedicated and serious efforts in the performance of his daunting tasks and my personal appreciation for his efforts to implement General Assembly resolutions adopted in emergency sessions held on the question of the situation in the Palestinian territories.

I feel sure that the Assembly will agree that all States Members of the United Nations are duty-bound to respect the provisions of the Charter, United Nations resolutions and the principles of international law. That is the only way to ensure international peace and security and is an indispensable condition for laying the foundation for balanced international relations among all peoples.

On that basis, my delegation is committed to the principles of law and international legality. We believe that international peace and security are endangered in the Middle East as a result of the threat to the peace process in the region. Hence, through this Assembly, my country calls upon the international community to assume its responsibility to deal with the threat to peace and to take immediate measures aimed at the immediate cessation of the building of settlements.

We support the idea of holding an international conference to consider the necessary measures to ensure the implementation of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Mauritania was one of the very first countries to welcome and support the peace process in the Middle East. We feel that no real and lasting peace in the region will come about unless the Palestinian people enjoys its legitimate rights and is able to establish its independent sovereign State with its capital in Jerusalem, and unless Israel withdraws from all the occupied Arab territories, including the Golan and southern Lebanon. This objective can best be realized within the framework of the Madrid Conference and the principle of land for peace, and through respect for the pertinent international resolutions, such as Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978) and the General Assembly resolutions adopted at this and previous sessions on the situation in the Palestinian territories.

Let us all work together to salvage and activate the peace process in the Middle East on all its tracks.

Mr. Al-Attar (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Allow me to express to you, Mr. President, our appreciation for the holding of this meeting to resume the tenth emergency special session, which began last April, when resolution ES-10/2 was adopted under the heading "United for peace" for the purpose of halting Israeli settlement activities in East Jerusalem.

The nearly unanimous will of the members of the General Assembly has not deterred Israel from pursuing its aggressive expansionist policy. The size and number of Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab territory, particularly in Jerusalem and the Golan, are being increased every day. In this connection, we would like to affirm that the Security Council's failure to shoulder its responsibilities under the Charter to deter the aggressor and stop the aggression confirms anew the important role of the General Assembly. Also, in accordance with

resolution 377 (V), our meeting today confirms the desire of the Member States to reform this Organization and to achieve a balance in international relations in order to lay the foundations of peace and stability in the world.

The Ambassador of Egypt, in his statement as Chairman of the Arab Group, expressed the position of the Arab States on the request to hold the tenth emergency special session. The Arab States thanked the Secretary-General for the report he submitted in this regard. I would like to add that resolution ES-10/2, adopted earlier in this special session, called upon Israel to stop immediately and completely the building of housing units in Jebel Abu Ghneim, as well as all other Israeli settlement activities. However, instead of implementing this resolution, Israel has stepped up the pace of new housing construction in East Jerusalem and has increased its settlement activities in all Palestinian occupied territories. It has started to build three new settlements in the lower eastern part of the occupied Syrian Golan.

In his report prepared pursuant to resolution ES-10/2, the Secretary-General reveals what has been taking place in the occupied Arab territory. He states that Israel is building new housing settlements in Jebel Abu Ghneim and has been confiscating lands, arresting, imprisoning and torturing Palestinians, demolishing their houses and imposing blockades. This report is an important new international document that could be added to dozens of others showing Israel's real intentions and purposes vis-à-vis the occupied Arab territory. It also proves that the Israeli settlement policy is in flagrant violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and of the Hague Rules of 1907. It also represents a flagrant violation of United Nations resolutions, running counter to Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 252 (1968).

General Assembly resolution 51/131 confirmed that the Israeli settlements are illegal and constitute an obstacle to the peace process and to economic and social development. It called upon Israel to put a complete stop to all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian lands, including Jerusalem and the occupied Syrian Golan.

Israel's insistence on opening the tunnel in the vicinity of Al-Haram al-Ibrahimi, which, as the Assembly knows, led to the Security Council's adoption of resolution 1073 (1996); the building of new settlements in Jebel Abu Ghneim, which has prompted the holding of this emergency special session; and the Israeli occupation authorities' continued measures to eliminate Palestinian identity in order to Judaize Jerusalem, together with the imposition of its laws and jurisdiction on the occupied Golan — all this is the result of a concerted design being carried out by the Israeli Government in accordance with its expansionist policy in order to destroy the substance of the Madrid Peace Conference and to dissociate itself from any commitment reached by the previous Israeli Government. It also aims to avoid the application of the principle of land for peace, the basis of Security Council resolution 242 (1967), which constituted the terms of reference for the Madrid Peace Conference. Israel aims to promote new ideas based on purported considerations of Israeli security. Israel would achieve this through expansion, at any cost, even if it embroils the whole region in destruction and terror.

I wish to point out that 15 years have passed since the General Assembly's last emergency special session, in 1982, on the Israeli determination to annex the occupied Syrian Golan, when resolution ES-9/1 was adopted. Both sessions have dealt with the same subject: the Israeli occupation of Arab territories, their annexation by force and the building of Israeli settlements on them. It is regrettable that Israel has not implemented either of the resolutions, or any other resolution adopted by this Organization.

In the light of these well-known facts, we must ask what has become of the peace process. What of its future? What of one of the most important principles on which it was built: land for peace? It is now obvious that Israel does not seek a real, just and comprehensive peace. It would like to have both a peace that serves its ambitions and an occupation that allows it to control the occupied Arab territories. Instead of providing the appropriate conditions to achieve peace in the region, Israel is doing just the opposite: it is intensifying its settlement practices in the occupied Arab territories, suppressing the freedoms of the Arab citizens, imposing a blockade on them and terrorizing and killing them.

Recent events, including the daily killing and wounding of Palestinians in the occupied territory, are testimony to the real nature of the Israeli terror. This calls for the international community to demand that Israel cease disregarding resolutions of international legitimacy.

At every opportunity the new Israeli Prime Minister has challenged the will of the international community and said that his Government would continue to build settlements, especially in Jebel Abu Ghneim. He also

declared to the French newspaper *Le Figaro*, on 18 January 1997, that Israel would not give up its control of the Golan for strategic and economic reasons and that Israel needed the Golan Heights because it needed water.

Mr. Martinez Blanco (Honduras), Vice-President, took the chair.

To resist occupation is a legitimate act and a national duty that has been exercised by many peoples of the world throughout history. It is recognized by all international documents. To stand against occupation and to hold on to one's land are legitimate rights. Sooner or later, the Israeli occupation will prove unable to nullify Arab sovereignty over occupied lands, including Jerusalem, the Golan and southern Lebanon. These lands will have to be returned to their legitimate owners.

Syria has always sought to achieve peace. It has made it a strategic objective. It has worked seriously to achieve it, and, despite the obstacles created by Israel, Syria still seeks to achieve a comprehensive and just peace that obliges Israel to withdraw completely from all occupied Arab territories — including Jerusalem, the Golan and southern Lebanon — in implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978), and in accordance with the principle of land for peace. Syria hopes that the day will come when the whole region will enjoy a full and comprehensive peace, a peace that spares the peoples of the region the scourge of war and achieves security and stability.

Mr. Kharrazi (Islamic Republic of Iran): Less than three months ago, at its tenth emergency special session the General Assembly overwhelmingly condemned the construction by Israel of a new settlement in Jebel Abu Ghneim in East Jerusalem and all other illegal Israeli actions in the occupied territories and requested the Secretary-General to monitor the situation and to submit a report on the implementation of resolution ES-10/2.

The adoption of that resolution at the emergency special session illustrated the outrage and grave concern of the world community over the continued expansionist policies of the Israeli regime in the occupied territories. It reflected as well the opposition of the overwhelming majority of the Member States of this body to the veto privilege, which was illogically and inappropriately exercised by a permanent member of the Security Council and which has all but crippled the Council in the discharge of its Charter obligations. As long as this unjust situation persists, the Security Council will remain paralysed and unable to oblige the Israeli regime to end its illegal actions and policies. Among those is the policy of constructing settlements in the occupied territories, particularly in Al-Quds al-Sharif.

In recent months, as in the past, the world has witnessed the intransigent refusal of Israel to abide by the wish of the international community. In this regard, the report submitted to the General Assembly by the Secretary-General in accordance with resolution ES-10/2 is a clear indication of the Israeli regime's total disregard for the rules of international law.

According to the report, it has not been possible for the Secretary-General to dispatch his Special Envoy to the occupied territories owing to the restrictions imposed by Israel on the scope of the Special Envoy's proposed mission. As of 20 June 1997, Israel had not abandoned its construction of the new settlement at Jebel Abu Ghneim. Accordingly, the settlement activities — including the expansion of existing settlements, the construction of bypass roads, the confiscation of land adjacent to settlements and related operations — have continued unabated throughout the occupied territories. Through both words and actions, the Israeli authorities continue to reject the resolution of the General Assembly calling for cessation of those activities and, as a consequence of this unlawful approach, they continue to pursue the policy of changing the demographic, geographical and religious status of the occupied territories.

According to the report of the Secretary-General, the new settlement in Jebel Abu Ghneim would result in the transfer of some 50,000 Jewish settlers into East Jerusalem, further altering the demographic character of the city. The attempts to change the basic characteristics of the Palestinian territories have always been an integral component of the Zionist grand design to perpetuate its occupation of Palestine. However, the construction of new Jewish settlements in East Jerusalem has taken that unholy policy a few steps forward.

The report of the Secretary-General further indicates that external support for settlers and their economic infrastructures still continues, particularly through private support from foreign companies and individuals. According to the report, in one highly publicized incident in June 1997, it was verified that a Days Inn hotel, a franchise of a hotel company based in the United States, was opened in a settlement in the Gaza Strip. Bearing in mind this element of foreign support and the fact that the

increase in the number of settlers during the last four years has been bigger than at any time in the past, one would come to the conclusion that Israel, supported by certain foreign quarters, is bent on continuing the occupation of Palestine.

The report of the Secretary-General has also provided ample description of the systematic inhumane practices of the Israeli regime, including the detention and torture of Palestinians, the sealing or demolition of houses and the prolonged closure of the territories. An increase in violent incidents involving settlers, as well as provocative measures taken by the Zionists such as the blasphemous act of a Jewish settler against the Holy Prophet of Islam, have caused much agony and grave concerns in the occupied territories and throughout the Islamic world.

In the view of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the General Assembly should condemn such heinous acts and, at a time when the Security Council has failed to prevent blatant and persistent violations of international law by Israel, at this emergency special session the General Assembly should consider further measures under the Charter to maintain international peace and security.

Mr. Kwok (Singapore): In April the General Assembly met in emergency special session to consider the issue now before us. Earlier, in March, the General Assembly had met in resumed session on the same issue. It is surely an unfortunate and extraordinary situation that necessitates us meeting for a third time in the space of five months on the very same issue.

Singapore regrets the circumstances that have made this necessary. These circumstances are set out in the Secretary-General's report prepared pursuant to resolution ES-10/2, adopted at the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, on 25 April 1997. We thank the Secretary-General for producing a report of such clarity. There is no doubt that Israel has continued activities that the international community has repeatedly and unambiguously pronounced as being unacceptable. We regret that the Israeli Government has not heeded the clear message of the international community.

As we stated on the two previous occasions when this issue was discussed, the Israeli Government's decision to proceed with the construction of an Israeli settlement in East Jerusalem can have the effect of undermining the spirit of trust and cooperation that is vital to the success of the Middle East peace process.

As we also stated on the two previous occasions when this issue was discussed, all Governments have the right to adopt policies that address the housing needs of their populations; indeed, this is one of the fundamental tasks of any self-respecting Government. Israel is entitled to its housing plans to provide for the housing needs of both Jews and Arabs in the country. However, the selection of East Jerusalem as the venue of the housing project is controversial, because unilateral steps that can alter the current status of Jerusalem will only complicate the already difficult negotiations. The final status of Jerusalem, a city of sacred importance not only to the Jews, but also to Muslims and Christians, is still subject to the outcome of negotiations between the two parties. Singapore therefore urges the Israeli Government to reconsider the housing project in East Jerusalem so that the peace process can continue unimpeded.

Singapore is firmly of the view that the peace process is the only path to peace and security for the Palestinians as well as for Israel and its neighbours. Singapore reaffirms its commitment to a comprehensive, just and lasting peace based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978), and within the framework of international law. We will continue to do what we can to support efforts to bring about the peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine so as to realize the just aspirations of the Palestinian people.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Spanish*): Before calling on the next speaker, I wish to inform members that a revised version of the draft resolution before the Assembly has just been made available in the General Assembly Hall, under the symbol A/ES-10/L.2/Rev.1.

Mr. Wolzfeld (Luxembourg) (*interpretation from French*): I have the honour to address the Assembly on behalf of the European Union. Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia align themselves with this statement. Iceland and Liechtenstein also align themselves with this statement.

The European Union regrets the fact that the General Assembly has had to meet again to examine the item entitled "Illegal Israeli actions in East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory".

The European Union has noted with concern the Secretary-General's report submitted in accordance with

General Assembly resolution ES-10/2 of 25 April 1997, which observes that

> "the Government of Israel ... has not abandoned its construction of a new Israeli settlement at Jebel Abu Ghneim" and that "... the expansion of existing settlements, the construction of bypass roads, the confiscation of land adjacent to settlements and related activities in violation of Security Council resolutions on the matter, continued unabated throughout the occupied territories". (*A/ES-10/6, para.15*)

The European Union is extremely concerned that construction work is continuing at Jebel Abu Ghneim/Har Homa and that Israel has failed to respond to the appeals of the international community for an immediate suspension of construction. The Union wishes to reiterate that settlements in the occupied territories contravene international law and constitute a major obstacle to peace. These activities constitute a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

The European Union is following recent developments in the situation in the occupied territories, particularly Hebron, with concern. Events of recent days underline the urgent need for both sides to show restraint, to refrain from any unilateral action that would prejudge permanent status issues, and to resume and maintain full security cooperation with the aim of fighting terrorism. The European Union encourages recent efforts aimed at restoring such cooperation in the field of security.

The European Union remains convinced that the peace process constitutes the only course by which peace and security can be established in the region. It calls upon the parties, in conformity with the declaration issued by the European Council at Amsterdam, to resume the political dialogue, to pursue the negotiations in order to make progress in the implementation of the Interim Agreement and the agreement on Hebron, and to restart the permanent status talks. Peace is possible, necessary and a matter of urgency in the Middle East.

Mr. Gorelik (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): The principal reason for resuming the work of the emergency special session of the General Assembly is the fact that the situation in the Middle East remains tense and, indeed, explosive. There has been particular disappointment at the fact that the Israeli Government has in essence ignored an unequivocal appeal by the international community to cease the construction of a new neighbourhood in East Jerusalem and of settlements in other Palestinian territories, an appeal set out in resolution ES-10/2, adopted last April at the tenth emergency special session.

We appreciate the efforts of the Secretary-General, who prepared in a timely manner a thorough and useful report which fully corroborates the concerns voiced by a majority of delegations last April, namely that the construction of new settlements considerably changes the demographic nature of East Jerusalem, isolates the city from the rest of the Palestinian territories, adversely affects the situation in the region and, finally, causes substantial damage to the peace process in the Middle East. Unfortunately, the Secretary-General was unable to dispatch a Special Envoy to the region to collect additional information on site, since Israel had placed impracticable conditions on his mission. We deplore this.

In the context of the Secretary-General's report, we reiterate that the final status of Jerusalem and the Palestinian territories can be defined only through the resumption of full-fledged negotiations. This option is dictated by the norms of international law and is prescribed in the Palestinian-Israeli agreements. True security cannot be guaranteed by erecting concrete walls unable to shield anyone from urgent and pressing problems. The parties must abstain from any unilateral action likely to affect aspects of the final status and are expected to establish, through confidence-building activities, effective cooperation in the sphere of security.

We are extremely concerned over the continuous clashes between the Palestinian population and Israeli soldiers. The Knesset's decision to annex to Israel all Israeli settlements in the occupied territories has poured more oil on the flame. In this connection, we would urge the parties to avoid any rash action likely to spill more blood.

Today, we launch a new appeal to the Government of Israel to put an immediate stop to the construction of the new neighbourhood in East Jerusalem and thus to take a decisive step towards defusing the current dangerous confrontation and breaking the deadlock in the peace process.

As a sponsor of the peace process, Russia will continue its purposeful work to reestablish constructive Palestinian-Israeli cooperation and to bring the parties to understand the need to resume their seats at the negotiating table forthwith, proceeding from the agreements reached earlier. The fate of the peace process

in general is directly linked to the reanimation of the Palestinian-Israeli track.

Mr. Kalaz (Yemen) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Today, the General Assembly is resuming its tenth emergency special session to consider the Israeli Government's failure to respond to its resolution ES-10/2 and to cooperate with the Secretary-General.

My delegation pays tribute to the Secretary-General and thanks him for his important report, issued despite Israel's obstruction of the mission of his Special Envoy, whom he had dispatched to Jerusalem. The report highlights the serious deterioration of the situation in the occupied territories. It confirms Israel's ongoing construction of Jewish settlements at Jebel Abu Ghneim and expansion of its settler activities in the other occupied Arab territories. It warns of the consequences of Israel's failure to cease its illegal activities.

My delegation condemns the Government of Israel for its refusal to respond to the General Assembly's resolutions and recommendations and denounces the obstacles set up by Israel to the Secretary-General's Special Envoy's implementation of the aforementioned resolution of the General Assembly. Perhaps the Government of Israel should recall that the State of Israel owes its legitimacy to a General Assembly resolution. Today, it rides roughshod over all United Nations resolutions. It refuses to allow any international envoy to pursue a fact-finding mission. Israel still speaks today of peace as it undermines the principles and bases of the peace process and boasts of its respect for human rights while committing the most heinous human rights violations, which have been confirmed and condemned by various human rights organizations.

The entire world has witnessed Israel's efforts to undermine the peace process. Examples of these efforts include the Israeli Government's political plan and the repeated statements made by the Prime Minister and other Israelis in authority on Jerusalem and the expansion of the settler policy, encouraging the settlers and the new immigrants to the occupied Arab territories. All this demonstrates that Israel has rejected all the agreements and conventions it has concluded with the Palestinian side. The international community finds itself in a serious predicament as a result of the extreme policies of the Government of Israel.

The Secretary-General's report reflects, *inter alia*, the intransigence and shamelessness of the Government of Israel, as well as its flouting of the resolutions of the international community, represented by the General Assembly. Each day, the mass media conveys frightening images of events in the occupied Arab territories.

Given these circumstances, my country's Government, as a sponsor of the resolution, confirms the following. First, States must be committed to the provisions of resolution ES-10/2 on the need to withhold all support from any settler policy for the occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem, pursued by the Government, companies and individuals. Secondly, in implementation of United Nations resolutions and international law, which confirm the illegitimacy of such settlements, no goods or food manufactured in the occupied Arab territories should be imported. Thirdly, the international community has to take effective measures to compel Israel to respect its commitments to the Palestinian Authority and to the principles and bases of the peace process in order to resuscitate the peace process in the area.

In conclusion, I seize this opportunity to convey to the President of the General Assembly, on behalf of my delegation, my sincere thanks and appreciation for his convening of this special session.

Mr. Erwa (Sudan) (*interpretation from Arabic*): I would like at the outset to thank the President for his tireless efforts to reconvene the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly. I would also like to convey my gratitude and appreciation to Mr. Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, for his follow-up work on resolution ES-10/2 of the tenth emergency session.

We are gathered here today less than three months after the convening of the tenth emergency session of the General Assembly — a session that has failed to draw the attention of Israel, which continues to defy the international community, especially in the wake of the Security Council's inability to stop it. What we see today is a horrendous deterioration in the situation; confrontation in the Arab occupied territories continues, a fact that threatens to ignite war in the area.

The delegation of the Sudan would like to express its appreciation for and commend the report of the Secretary-General. This objective international document reflects the danger posed by Israel's settlement policies and by its violations of the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.

The report states:

> "According to the information available to the United Nations, the Government of Israel, as of 20 June 1997, has not abandoned its construction of a new Israeli settlement at Jebel Abu Ghneim. Settlement activity, including the expansion of existing settlements, the construction of bypass roads...and related activities in violation of Security Council resolutions on the matter, continued unabated throughout the occupied territories." *(A/ES-10/6, para. 15)*

Paragraph 15 of the Secretary-General's report reflects the political, demographic and economic consequences of the construction of the Abu Ghneim settlement. In this connection, the report stresses that the implementation of those Israeli policies targets the legal status and demographic composition of Jerusalem and that the construction of the settlement of Abu Ghneim constitutes

> "the final step towards the isolation of Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank and as part of the stated policy of the Government of Israel of fully incorporating occupied East Jerusalem as part of the 'unified eternal capital of the State of Israel'." *(ibid.)*

The Secretary-General also states in his report:

> "Owing to the restrictions imposed on the scope of my Special Envoy's proposed mission by the Government of Israel...which were not acceptable to the United Nations, I regret that it has not been possible to dispatch a Special Envoy to Israel and the occupied territories in conditions that would have enabled me to discharge the mandate entrusted to me by the General Assembly in a fully satisfactory manner." *(ibid, para. 14)*

Israel's unjustified refusal to receive the Secretary-General's Envoy shows clearly its persistence in defying United Nations resolutions.

Israel is continuing to take a series of actions aimed at altering the demographic and legal character of Jerusalem in order to Judaize Arab Jerusalem and to change the legal, historical and religious status of the city. All of these actions violate the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and the Hague Convention of 1907. They also violate Security Council resolutions 252 (1968) and 476 (1980), which reaffirm that all Israeli actions taken in Jerusalem are invalid and null and void. In this connection, the Sudan calls upon the United Nations to pressure Israel to lift the blockade of the city and to allow Palestinian citizens — Muslims and Christians — to perform their religious rituals.

The Sudan believes strongly that a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East will not be achieved unless Israel refrains from its settlement activities and policies, and withdraws from all the occupied Arab territories in the West Bank, including Jerusalem, the Syrian Golan — which it occupied in 1967 — and southern Lebanon, based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978). It should respect the inalienable rights of the Palestinians, including their right to establish the state of Palestine, with Holy Jerusalem as its capital.

The Sudan reiterates its condemnation of the illegal Israeli measures in East Jerusalem and the Israeli practice of allowing its armed settlers to terrorize unarmed people in the occupied territories, with the goal of emptying Palestine of its Arab inhabitants. It calls upon Israel to renounce these policies, which could draw the entire region into further confrontation and instability.

Therefore the Sudan, which is co-sponsoring the draft resolution before the General Assembly, calls upon all Member States to join their voices to that of justice and truth, so that peace may be achieved and security prevail in the Middle East, and that the state of Palestine may be declared, with the Holy City of Jerusalem as its capital.

Mr. Muntasser (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*interpretation from Arabic*): At the outset, I should like to join previous speakers in expressing once again to Mr. Razali Ismail our great appreciation for his efforts to achieve the purposes and objectives of this Organization. On behalf of my delegation, I should like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive and objective report, which he submitted at the request of the General Assembly.

Once again, we meet in this emergency session of the General Assembly. The representatives of the international community have gathered to discuss the Zionist intransigence and arrogance and its disregard for Security Council and General Assembly resolutions; its continued policy of building new settlements and of expropriating other lands of the Palestinian people; and its aggression against the Christian and Islamic holy

places, riding roughshod over all international instruments and laws.

The Security Council and the General Assembly have adopted numerous resolutions condemning the shameful and inhuman acts of the occupying authorities in Palestine, most important of which is Security Council resolution 478 (1980), which stipulates that all measures and actions taken by the Zionist occupation authorities under occupied land, particularly in Jerusalem, are considered null and void.

This resumed session of the General Assembly is being held after the Security Council was prevented from adopting a draft resolution concerning the Zionist settlements because a permanent member of the Council imposed its policies and exploited the mechanism of that Council — which makes it necessary to reform the Council before we expand it — and used the privilege of veto to support the continued aggression and the continued settlement-building in occupied Palestine.

The resistance we are seeing today in the occupied territory is an expression of frustration and despair on the part of the Palestinian people which witnesses on a daily basis Israeli's intransigence and its policy of humiliation for Islamic and Arab nations. All this results from the biased position of the United States of America because it both politically and financially encourages the occupation authorities to carry out expansion by force and to challenge United Nations resolutions.

It is ironic that the United States — a permanent member of the Security Council — is promoting the Israeli policy. It makes illogical, silly and contradictory excuses in order to prevent the Security Council from adopting a resolution that condemns arbitrary Israeli policies, contending that the United Nations is not the appropriate forum to discuss this question.

On the other hand, we find that other issues that do not belong in the Security Council are imposed on the Council's agenda. This policy of double standards and the adoption of resolutions that suit private interests is regrettable, as it threatens the credibility of the Organization and leaves it in a state of suspension. Thus, we all have to work in earnest to liberate the Organization from American hegemony.

The policy of double standards is evidenced by the adoption of unnecessary resolutions while at the same time the Security Council does not have the will to face the Israeli policies of aggression against the Arab nations and the Palestinian people, because of the protection afforded by a member of the Security Council. This policy will affect the usefulness and the credibility of the Organization. This will push the people to resort to other means in order to achieve justice and do away with injustice.

We are discussing an extremely important and sensitive issue that requires the adoption of very important resolutions aimed at ending illegal Israeli practices. In this way we can save the region from a bloody conflict that would threaten international peace and security. Allah says in the Koran that those who are unjust will reap the results sooner or later.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): Allow me to take this opportunity to express my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General for his concise report contained in document A/ES-10/6 of 26 June 1997 and for its timely presentation.

At the same, time may I also register my delegation's dismay regarding the refusal of the Government of Israel to allow the dispatch of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy to Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories owing to that Government's insistence that the visit should be based on its invitation and not be associated with the resolution of the General Assembly. This clearly indicates Israel's total disregard for General Assembly resolutions on the question of Palestine. The international community should therefore make a concerted effort to compel the Government of Israel to respect United Nations resolutions on this matter, particularly the provisions of General Assembly resolution ES-10/2.

In this regard, my delegation reiterates its belief that the General Assembly should continue to play an active role in the peace process in the Middle East.

At the earlier meetings of the emergency special session of the General Assembly on occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the occupied Palestinian territories, held in April this year, many delegations, including my own, emphasized that one of the first steps towards consolidating the Middle East peace process was the immediate cessation of creating new settlements in Jebel Abu Ghneim. Regrettably, however, the building of new settlements by the Government of Israel continues unabated, as stated in paragraph 15 of the Secretary-General's report. This is a blatant violation of

the provisions of Security Council and General Assembly resolutions on this issue.

These illegal activities are not conducive to consolidating peace, but are a major obstacle to peace and violate the letter and the spirit of the Madrid Conference and the Oslo accords, as well as the Fourth Geneva Convention. One wonders whether the Government of Israel is really committed to peace in the Middle East. The peace process cannot coexist with the acquisition of territories by force, for the two are incompatible. All efforts should be made to compel the Government of Israel to abide by the commitments it made in the framework of the Madrid Conference and the Oslo accords.

We commend the efforts of President Mubarak of Egypt and other leaders in the region to revive the peace process. We give them our full support. However, we are gravely concerned at the continuous, ever increasing escalation of violence in the occupied territories, which aggravates the already fragile negotiations. The unfortunate and deteriorating security situation warrants that leaders should gather around the negotiating table so as to give peace a chance. Although the international community has an active role to play in the peace process, we believe that it is the parties themselves who bear the ultimate responsibility for their own destiny. To this end, we urge both sides, especially the Government of Israel, to commit themselves to abide by the obligations they have made and to the search for a peaceful resolution of their differences.

My delegation reiterates its firm belief that a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East is simply not possible without the full realization of the right to self-determination and complete nationhood of the Palestinian people. Namibia's position is very clear on this issue. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to reaffirm our support for and solidarity with the people of Palestine under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

As we approach a new millennium, the necessity to end the Israeli occupation becomes imperative. We cannot enter the new millennium with a mindset characterized by confrontation and land-grabbing. To this end, we once more appeal to the Government of Israel to cease creating new settlements in Jebel Abu Ghneim, thus ending the vicious cycle of violence, and to resume the negotiations for lasting peace in the best interest of all parties in the Middle East.

Mr. Legwaila (Botswana): Over two months ago this body convened this emergency session to respond to an ominous challenge to the Middle East peace process. The facts were clear then, as they are today. The construction by Israel of a settlement at Jebel Abu Ghneim in East Jerusalem was contrary to the spirit of the peace agreements it had signed with its partners, the Palestinians, and in violation of the principles of international law. This Assembly condemned that activity and demanded that Israel immediately cease the construction.

Israel has neither heeded the demands of the Assembly nor facilitated the efforts of the Secretary-General to fulfil his mandate under resolution ES-10/2. What is more, we learn from the report of the Secretary-General that the expansion of other settlements and other related activities in contravention of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 have continued unabated, in total oblivion to all the repeated injunctions issued in the past by both the General Assembly and the Security Council.

This body did not convene on 25 April 1997 for the fun of chastising Israel. It was convened to respond, as a matter of urgency, to a very serious threat posed to the extremely fragile peace process in the Middle East engendered by the continuation of Israel's bulldozer policies. The immense sacrifices which men, women and children in both Israel and Palestine have made in the past to bring the war-weary Middle East to the brink of peace cannot and must not be allowed to come to naught. Too many innocent lives have been wasted in the Middle East. The peace process which began so hopefully a bit more than five years ago is likewise in danger of being wasted.

Israel argues that the construction of the settlement in Jebel Abu Ghneim is necessitated by the natural growth of the city of Jerusalem. This argument misses the point completely. The city of Jerusalem is not an ordinary city. It is a disputed city and a subject of the negotiations which currently lie in prostration. Why build new settlements in East Jerusalem, we ask, when the negotiations over the status of the city are to settle the issue once and for all? Why, we ask, create facts on the ground to pre-empt the negotiations and by so doing pollute the atmosphere around the peace process?

It is obvious that for the comatose peace process in the Middle East to bear fruit, Israel and the Palestinians must feel in equal measure that they have a stake in it.

The Palestinians, who have been stateless for decades, must be made to feel that at long last they are about to have a place they can call their own in which their present and future generations can live as free human beings and in peace. The converse is also true in full measure. The Jewish people must be made to feel that the Middle East belongs to them, too, and that they and their present and future generations can live in the area as free human beings and in peace.

This is what the peace process is all about — if only it can be given a chance to succeed, if only the advocates of war to the bitter end on both sides of the Middle East conflict can be isolated and/or denied the excuse to persist in their murderous rampage.

Mr. Tanç (Turkey): It was our sincere hope that the meetings of the tenth emergency special session held on 24 and 25 April 1997 and resolution ES-10/2, adopted on 25 April 1997, would have finally been sufficient to produce the necessary result. We had hoped that Israel would have terminated the policies and practices in the occupied territories which have led to the crisis at hand and the break in the peace process.

However, we are deeply concerned, upon learning from the report prepared by the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution ES-10/2, that Israel is not conforming to the provisions of the resolution. We thank the Secretary-General for his report, which clearly indicates that the construction of new Israeli settlements, the general settlement activity and other restrictive and repressive measures are continuing. Thus, it has become necessary to reconvene the special session.

The settlement activity and all the related measures undertaken by Israel are of a nature to change the parameters of the peace process. If finalized, they will predetermine the outcome of the negotiations under way between the two parties. Thus, they constitute a real threat to the agreed principles on which the whole peace exercise rests.

It is unnecessary to stress the significance of the Middle East peace process for the promotion and preservation of peace, stability and security in that area. In fact, the peace process can be viewed as the single most important development in the fragile Middle East region in recent times. The successful outcome of the peace process will form the basis of a just, comprehensive and lasting solution to the conflict that has caused so much suffering and turmoil in our region.

The Middle East peace process remains the only valid method of finding a just solution to the Middle East problem. However, the above-mentioned policies of Israel are diverting the process from the path it should be taking. Events are moving in an undesired and dangerous direction. The peace talks are blocked, agreements cannot be implemented and violence has broken out in the streets. This situation is not in anyone's interest. In this respect, I would like to reiterate my Government's strong opposition to the resort to acts of violence and terrorism, whatever the source may be.

A point my delegation has made before in the General Assembly and in the Security Council is that the peace process may be irreparably damaged at any time as a result of these actions. We firmly believe that the time has come, and is passing, for this trend to be stopped.

The Middle East peace process is the fruit of the great expectations of Palestinians and Israelis and of all the peoples in the region. It is the vision of great statesmen. Every effort has to be expended now to bring to an end the activity in the occupied territories that has caused the disruption of the peace process and has led to the present situation.

We commend and appreciate the efforts being made by various countries to help the parties resolve their differences and to put the peace process back on the right track. Turkey, on its part, is also making its views known at the bilateral level with a view to contributing to a resolution of this crisis.

At this resumed emergency special session, we strongly urge the Israeli Government to respect fully the sanctity and status of Al-Quds al-Sharif under international law and to bring to an end all the settlement activities in the occupied territories, especially in Jebel Abu Ghneim. It is imperative that the golden opportunity created by the peace process for peace, security and prosperity in the Middle East, and beyond, is not lost.

Mr. Insanally (Guyana): It is a matter of regret that we have to meet now in a resumed session of the tenth emergency special session of the United Nations General Assembly to consider once more the question of illegal Israeli actions in occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the occupied Palestinian territory. I say regret because resolution ES-10/2, which was adopted on 25 April 1997, appears to have had no positive impact on the situation. The peace process is still in jeopardy and there is heightened concern that it may even be derailed.

The Secretary-General's report, for which we are most grateful and on which our comments are based, presents a bleak prospect for improvement. The construction of the housing settlement in Jebel Abu Ghneim continues apace. The Palestinians' lands are still being confiscated and their homes demolished. Other settlement activities such as the expansion of existing settlements and the construction of bypass roads are being carried out. The rights of the Palestinians continue to be violated so that life in the occupied territories is one of continuing hardship.

Like so many others who have spoken today, we are disappointed that because of the restrictions imposed by the Government of Israel, the visit to the region contemplated by the Secretary-General's Special Envoy has been frustrated. In defiance of all United Nations resolutions, Israel persists in its claim that this Organization is not a proper forum for discussion of the Palestinian issue and that our deliberations here can only cause harm to the peace process.

We must remember, however, that the United Nations has a historic role in this question — a role which dates back to 1948 when the General Assembly decided on the partitioning of Palestine and the future of that region. It must be the arbiter of peace and security in the region. Faced with the worsening situation that has been so vividly described by the Secretary-General in his report, the United Nations cannot now withdraw nor remain aloof from what is happening there. Israeli actions in East Jerusalem and the rest of the occupied Palestinian territory which violate United Nations resolutions and international law must be condemned by the international community.

On behalf of the Government of Guyana, I must reiterate today what I said at the opening of the emergency special session, that all acts of provocation to violence must now cease and the rights of all States and peoples in the region must be respected and honoured. The Government of Israel must recognize the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and, in turn, its own security concerns must be addressed. Without a just and comprehensive settlement of these respective claims, the Middle East will never have lasting peace and security.

Yet another draft resolution on the Middle East peace process will be introduced at this session. It is a further message to the parties concerned to resume their negotiations in good faith. Draft resolution A/ES-10/L.2/Rev.1 must be seen as another attempt by the Assembly to preserve the peace process and, indeed, to promote a definitive settlement of the Palestinian issue. In Guyana's view, the thrust of the present text conforms to the position of the Non-Aligned Movement which was adopted at its ministerial meeting in New Delhi last April. Consequently, as a member of the Movement, we will subscribe to the draft resolution and we will cooperate with the international community to see what can be done in practical terms to achieve its stated aims.

Mr. Hamdoon (Iraq) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The General Assembly is convened at this tenth emergency special session to follow up the implementation of its resolution ES-10/2 of 25 April 1997, which was adopted by an overwhelming majority.

I wish, at the outset, to register our appreciation for the objective and neutral manner in which the report of the Secretary-General, in document A/ES-10/6, was couched. It confirmed beyond a doubt Israel's disregard of the will of the international community and its insistence on continuing to build settlements at Jebel Abu Ghneim, as well as in the rest of the Palestinian territories, in an attempt to force a change in the demographic composition of Palestinian territory. This is also an attempt to change the character and legal status of Jerusalem.

The report of the Secretary-General makes mention of Israel's activities which flagrantly violate international law. The following are examples of such activities: the detention and torture of Palestinians, mass punishment, the demolition of houses, economic blockade and the refusal to apply the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 in all the occupied Arab territories. Lastly, the report refers to the obstacles created by Israel to obstruct the mission of the Secretary-General, which made it impossible for the mission to be dispatched.

These and many other practices documented by the United Nations confirm the volatility of the situation in the occupied Arab territories that gravely jeopardizes peace and security in the region and the world at large. This places before the international community an inevitable challenge, if it wishes to give precedence to the rule of law over force and to preserve the principles on which the international Organization was founded. The draft resolution before us presents a response, albeit a partial one, to this challenge.

Israel's flouting of the will of the international community and its persistence in violating international law and the resolutions of the General Assembly would

not be possible without its feeling exempt from the application of international law. There is a super-Power that defends its practices no matter how far Israel goes in violating international law. The United States has resorted to the veto twice in one month in order to obstruct any condemnation of Israel in the Security Council. The United States attempted to prevent the convening of the emergency special session and voted against resolution ES-10/2.

The United States spares no effort to prevent this resumed session from adopting a resolution in consonance with the gravity of Israeli conduct. What is bizarre and ironic and exposes the double-standard policies of the United States — which seeks to suit the measures of the United Nations to its own interests — is that it has created a crisis between the Special Commission and Iraq and has called upon the Security Council to impose new punishments on Iraq that are unprecedented in the history of the United Nations.

The draft resolution presented by the United States to the Security Council last month demanded that, *inter alia*, States prevent all Iraqi officials and their families from entering their territories.

We call on the United States to let the voice of reason prevail over blind excess, and to stop supporting Israeli practices that violate international law. The work of the General Assembly must run its course; the Assembly must carry out its Charter responsibility with respect to the maintenance of international peace and security, and confront the destructive implications of Israel's expansionist policies for the Arab territories.

Mr. Richardson (United States of America): For the second time since April we have gathered here to consider the issues discussed in the report of the Secretary-General. As that report makes clear, there are a number of divisive questions that have lately hampered the ability of Palestinians and Israelis to move forward in their search for lasting peace. These are serious questions, and they deserve serious deliberation. Let me say at the outset, however, that my Government does not believe that the draft resolution now before the General Assembly serves that goal. It is a partisan text aimed not at building confidence or dialogue, but at confrontation.

The specifics of this draft resolution will not serve the cause of peace in the Middle East. To the extent that the text is designed to inject the United Nations and other bodies into deliberations between the parties, it detracts from the peace process. It will make the work of the negotiating partners harder, and not easier. The draft resolution will not accomplish the goal it ostensibly seeks to achieve.

Let me underscore the United States view of the dispute which has led to this debate today. We share the concerns that many Member States have expressed about the decision of the Israeli Government to begin construction at Har Homa. We have repeatedly said that construction at that site is not helpful to the peace process. President Clinton has said that we would have preferred that this decision had not been made. It undermines the trust and confidence needed to renew the momentum of the peace process and clouds the environment for successful negotiations, especially on the difficult permanent status issues. Both parties must take special care to avoid preemptive actions that can be seen to prejudge the outcome of negotiations, while working hard to build the trust and confidence that productive negotiations require. So should the States members of the General Assembly.

The United States strongly objects to several elements of this draft resolution, which would undermine rather than build the trust and confidence the negotiating parties need. First, the economic measures envisioned in the draft resolution amount to a demand for a partial economic boycott of Israel. Such a demand runs counter to a basic building block of the peace process: the pledges of the negotiating parties to build economic ties as a means of advancing the process; it contradicts the intentions of the Casablanca, Amman and Cairo economic summits; and it is inconsistent with the intentions of the General Assembly, which each year since 1993 has passed a resolution expressing support for the peace process in the Middle East, including economic cooperation as a means of supporting the process.

Secondly, there should be no language, either explicit or implicit, threatening the participation of any Member in the General Assembly; this contradicts the basic principle of universal and equal participation by all Member States in all activities of the United Nations. Such efforts are a throwback to the ugly credentials challenges of past decades and, like other elements of the draft resolution, are a disproportionate response to the dispute in question.

Thirdly, we do not believe that a conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention is the proper forum to address the situation considered by the draft resolution. As I have said, these

matters are the subject of direct negotiations between the parties themselves and should be left to the parties to work out. It would be counterproductive to introduce another body into the Middle East peace process. We also are troubled by the ostensible goal of that conference: "to enforce the Convention" (*A/ES-10/L.2, para. 10*). What can that mean? And how can the Secretary-General report on it? This is nothing more than a device to perpetuate the counterproductive cycle of special sessions of the General Assembly.

In sum, this draft resolution will further aggravate prospects for renewed progress in the peace process, which is after all a goal shared by most members of the General Assembly, and certainly by the Palestinians and the Israelis themselves.

We all want to help achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement of the conflict in the Middle East. The United States has played a critical role in the many accomplishments of the peace process to date. As do other nations like us, we wish for peace and prosperity for Israeli and Palestinian alike. The United Nations can play a positive and important role in that quest.

The question we must ask ourselves, then, is this: does this emergency special session, and does this draft resolution, contribute to that goal? The answer I am afraid is, "No". This seeks confrontation, not reconciliation, and punishment rather than progress. To achieve progress, we must find constructive means of helping the parties. But nowhere in this draft resolution is there so much as a hint of true constructive intent. My Government will therefore vote against this draft resolution, and strongly urges all others who share the goal of peace in the Middle East to do the same.

Mr. Mapuranga (Zimbabwe): Zimbabwe participated in the deliberations of the first part of this emergency special session. Since then, my country has continued to follow events and developments in the Middle East with keen interest and great concern. During the first part of this emergency special session, my delegation expressed, and indeed demonstrated, its unreserved support for resolution ES-10/2, which called upon Israel to abandon its construction of the new settlement at Jebel Abu Ghneim and the expansion of existing ones. We are therefore disappointed that the Government of Israel has failed to comply with the demands made by the international community through the General Assembly.

We cannot fail to commend the enormous efforts expended by the Secretary-General to give the Government of Israel ample opportunity to cooperate with him in clearing the way for the full implementation of the decision of the General Assembly. In this regard, it is indeed regrettable that the Government of Israel has not only failed to comply with resolution ES-10/2, but has also obstructed the Secretary-General's efforts to unblock the impasse.

When the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Council of Ministers met in its sixty-sixth session in Harare from 30 to 31 May this year, it passed a resolution which was subsequently endorsed by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in their thirty-third session. The OAU called upon Israel

> "to immediately halt construction work being carried out in Jabal Abu Ghneim and urges the countries that sponsor the peace process, the parties concerned and the international community at large to suspend all forms of assistance and support to the illegal activities being undertaken in occupied Palestinian territories".

The OAU further called for

> "the freezing of relations with Israel at their present level due to the gravity and urgency of the situation".

And so, Zimbabwe joins the rest of the world in calling upon Israel, a State with which Zimbabwe has diplomatic relations, to abandon its policy of constructing settlements on occupied Arab territories. It is imperative that Israel put a halt to this and other policies and practices which tend to cast an ominous shadow over that peace process. Accordingly, Zimbabwe urges all delegations to lend their support to the draft resolution now before this special session. I am referring here to draft resolution A/ES-10/L.2/Rev.1 — the one that appears in blue. I am saying this in conclusion because there should be no doubt whatsoever as to which draft resolution we are voting on. This draft resolution is rational — very rational — temperate and non-confrontational.

Mr. Rodríguez Parrilla (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): We are meeting for the second time in just over two months to consider what has become a constant in the policy and practice of the State of Israel: the violation of the provisions of the peace agreements and the

concomitant violation of all the rights of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories.

We are pleased on this occasion to have the Secretary-General's report which, allowing for no doubts, documents with great clarity the schemes of the occupying Power to hinder the full implementation of resolution ES-10/2. It also documents the veto twice exercised by the Government of the United States in the Security Council, which is generally quite swift to defend the desires and interests of some of its members and whose inaction is a manifest example of the double standard reigning in that body.

The Secretary-General's report is also clear on the consequences of the current situation in occupied Palestine not only for the survival of the peace process now being undermined, but also for the life and most legitimate hopes of a people whose territories have been occupied, most fundamental rights violated, sons terrorized and means of subsistence jeopardized, and that now finds itself threatened with disappearance as a nation, first being scattered throughout the world and then having its demographic composition deliberately and ever more radically altered.

In our opinion, the Secretary-General has correctly identified the political, geographical, demographic and economic circumstances that make the events under debate here today particularly alarming. One need only add that the exacerbation of the discrimination against the Palestinian people that has always characterized Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories is today worse than ever, coming as it does at a time when the peace process appeared to be restoring to the legitimate inhabitants of the area their stolen lands and their trampled rights.

In its statement during the earlier part of this tenth emergency special session, my delegation clearly laid out, yet again, its positions on the issue under discussion today and on Israel's practices in the occupied Palestinian territories, as well as on the deplorable policy of the Government of the United States, Israel's main strategic ally and the prime actor in this Organization's inability to adopt concrete measures aimed at establishing justice, equity and legitimacy based on the principles of international law.

The international community must condemn Israel unequivocally for failing to end the conditions that gave rise to the resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 April, flouting the will of this, the principal organ of our Organization.

Israel must cease its settlement of the occupied Arab territories and its efforts to alter their demographic composition; stop its repressive terror tactics against the Palestinian people; fulfil its commitments undertaken in the peace agreements; and desist in its attempts to alter the status of Jerusalem, in well-known violation of many resolutions of this Organization.

Today, we insist on the urgency of the international community's acting on two fronts. First, measures must be adopted and implemented to protect the threatened Palestinian population. The Fourth Geneva Convention, applicable *de jure* to the occupied Palestinian territories, as the Secretary-General reminds us in his report, is the appropriate framework for initiating such action. Secondly, it is indispensable that we work to ensure that the provisions of the peace agreements and their guiding principles be implemented fully, immediately, unconditionally and transparently.

For these reasons, Cuba is a sponsor of the draft resolution before the General Assembly, which pursues these objectives. We hope this exercise today will contribute to saving the peace process and achieving the purposes laid down, and that it will allow the Palestinian people to exercise, in dignity and forever, its legitimate rights and aspirations to self-determination, peace and development.

Mr. Pham Quang Vinh (Viet Nam): At the outset, I should like, on behalf of the delegation of Viet Nam, to join previous speakers in stressing the importance of this resumed tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly to consider the agenda item "Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory".

This is the third time in the last four months that our General Assembly has been in session on this subject. The General Assembly, meeting on 13 March last during its resumed fifty-first session, adopted by an overwhelming majority a resolution calling for an immediate end to the Israeli construction of settlements in Jebel Abu Ghneim. That call was not heeded. Then the tenth emergency special session, a special procedure, was convened last April and adopted resolution ES-10/2, aimed at giving effect to such a call by the international community and saving the peace process in the Middle East. That call was not heeded either.

In his recent report, the Secretary-General regrets Israel's non-cooperation in the implementation of

resolution ES-10/2 and its continuation of the construction of the settlement at Jebel Abu Ghneim. The Secretary-General also notes that the State of Israel has not accepted the de jure applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 to all territories occupied since 1967.

The position of Viet Nam is clear. As a matter of principle, Viet Nam has, together with other countries, expressed its grave concern over the continued construction of the Jebel Abu Ghneim settlement, as this seriously endangers the hard-won progress in the peace progress, thus making the situation in the Middle East more volatile and violating the relevant United Nations resolutions as well as the agreements reached.

Viet Nam further reaffirms the view that this resumed tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly should therefore ensure that exhaustive efforts aimed at reaching a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region be made; that commitments under the agreements already reached be seriously honoured; and that measures aimed at effectively bringing about an immediate end to the current obstacles to the Middle East peace process be taken.

The United Nations has a crucial role to play in the question of Palestine and the Middle East, in promoting the current peace process and in assuring the Palestinian people of their inalienable rights. There should not be any retreat from the commitment to peace or any further deepening of mistrust, as the situation has already been aggravated by the recent Israeli activities in the occupied territories. What is most important at this point for the international community is for it to intensify its efforts to restore and build confidence in the Middle East.

Viet Nam supports the early achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement that will ensure the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination and statehood. We urge all parties to resume contact in good faith on the basis of the agreements already reached and to seek a comprehensive, just and lasting peace. In this regard, it is necessary to respect the basis upon which the peace process was initiated, namely the implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), and the principle of the return of land for peace.

The President took the Chair.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia to introduce draft resolution A/ES-10/L.2/Rev.1.

Mr. Sriwidjaja (Indonesia): On behalf of the co-sponsors — Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cuba, Djibouti, Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam and Yemen — I deem it a distinct honour and privilege to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/ES-10/L.2/Rev.1 on "Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory".

The draft resolution constitutes the follow-up of resolution ES-10/2, which was overwhelmingly adopted by the tenth emergency special session last April. Thus the preamble of our draft today is brief, and the main elements of the operative paragraphs are practical in nature.

By the terms of the preambular paragraphs of the draft resolutions, the General Assembly would state that it has received with appreciation the report of the Secretary-General and would reaffirm its resolution ES-10/2 of 25 April 1997. The fourth preambular paragraph notes salient points contained in the report of the Secretary-General.

The General Assembly would further express awareness that in the light of the position of the Government of Israel, as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General, the General Assembly should once more consider the situation with a view to making additional appropriate recommendations to States Members of the United Nations, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 377 A (V) of 3 November 1950.

Through operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would condemn the failure of the Government of Israel to comply with the demands made by the General Assembly at its tenth emergency special session in resolution ES-10/2, while through operative paragraph 2, the General Assembly would strongly deplore the Israeli Government's lack of cooperation and its attempt to impose restrictions upon the intended mission of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General to Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem.

Operative paragraph 3 reaffirms that all illegal Israeli actions in occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the occupied Palestinian territory, especially settlement activity, and the practical results thereof cannot be recognized irrespective of the passage of time.

In operative paragraph 4, the General Assembly reiterates the demands made in resolution ES-10/2.

Through operative paragraph 5, the General Assembly would demand also that Israel, the occupying Power, immediately cease and reverse all actions taken illegally under international law against Palestinian Jerusalemites.

Operative paragraph 6 contains recommendations to Member States to discourage activities which contribute to any construction or development of Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem.

I should like to draw the Assembly's attention to an addition that should be made to the end of the paragraph, as a phrase was inadvertently left out of the text submitted to the Secretariat. In this regard, after the words "including Jerusalem", add "as these activities contravene international law.".

The Assembly would demand through operative paragraph 7 that Israel, the occupying Power, make available to Member States the necessary information about goods produced and manufactured in the illegal settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem.

In operative paragraph 8, the General Assembly stresses that all Member States, in order to ensure their rights and benefits resulting from membership, should fulfil in good faith the obligations assumed by them in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. The language used in that paragraph is the same as in Article 2, paragraph 2, of the Charter.

Operative paragraph 9 emphasizes the responsibilities, including personal ones, arising from persistent violations and grave breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Through operative paragraph 10, the Assembly would recommend that the High Contracting Parties of the aforementioned Convention convene a conference on measures to enforce the Convention in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and to ensure its respect, in accordance with common article 1, and requests the Secretary-General to present a report on the matter within three months.

At this point, I should like once again to draw the attention of members to the fact that the word "and" should be added before "requests the Secretary-General".

The General Assembly, in operative paragraph 11, would call for reinjecting momentum into the stalled Middle East peace process and for the implementation of the agreements reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, as well as for the upholding of the principles of the process, including the exchange of land for peace, and would call upon both sides to refrain from actions that impede the peace process by pre-empting permanent status negotiations.

Through operative paragraph 12, the Assembly would stress the need for actions in accordance with the Charter to ensure respect for international law and relevant United Nations resolutions.

Finally, in operative paragraph 13, the Assembly decides to adjourn the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly temporarily and to authorize the President of the most recent General Assembly to resume its meetings upon request from Member States. The formulation of this paragraph ensures the possible reconvening of the tenth emergency special session after the onset of the fifty-second session of the General Assembly.

The draft resolution now before the Assembly is a balanced and reasonable document that is the product of extensive consultations between the sponsors and Member States. Its adoption would go a long way towards mitigating the current volatile situation and would be fully consistent with the aim of reviving the stalled peace process. Therefore, on behalf of the sponsors, my delegation fully recommends its adoption by the Assembly.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate for this meeting.

In view of the desire of the members to dispose of this item expeditiously, I should like to consult the Assembly with a view to proceeding immediately to consider the draft resolution contained in document A/ES-10/L.2/Rev.1, as orally revised. In this connection, since the draft resolution has been circulated only this afternoon, it would be necessary to waive the relevant provision of rule 78 of the rules of procedure, which reads as follows:

"As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the General Assembly unless copies of it have been circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meeting."

Unless I hear any objection, I will take it that the Assembly agrees with this proposal.

It was so decided.

The President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/ES-10/L.2/Rev.1, as orally revised.

I give the floor to the representative of Japan on a point of order.

Mr. Owada (Japan): I apologize for intervening at this stage, but I should like to raise a point of order.

An oral amendment has been made to the document which has been circulated. I should like to seek clarification, because I am not quite sure how this is going to be changed.

The President: The changes that were made just now by the representative of Indonesia indicated the various revisions that had been made as per consultations held and agreements reached earlier. I thought that the representative of Indonesia indicated clearly where the changes are, so we are going to vote on the basis of the revised draft, as changed and revised by the representative of Indonesia.

I give the floor to the representative of Japan on a point of order.

Mr. Owada (Japan): I am not objecting to the procedure. What I am seeking is a clarification. I just want to be sure about the exact text of the draft resolution we are voting on, and so I am seeking clarification on how exactly it is going to be changed.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Indonesia on a point of clarification.

Mr. Sriwidjaja (Indonesia): In paragraph 6, a phrase was inadvertently left out of the text submitted to the Secretariat. In this regard, after the words "including Jerusalem", add "as these activities contravene international law".

The President: Members are advised also that in paragraph 10, the word "and" should be added. Paragraph 10 should read:

"*Recommends* that the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War convene a conference on measures to enforce the Convention in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and to ensure its respect, in accordance with common article 1, and requests the Secretary-General to present a report on the matter within three months".

These two additions constitute the oral revisions made by the delegation of Indonesia. I hope that all members concerned are satisfied with these indications of where the revisions are and that we can proceed with the voting.

We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/ES-10/L.2/Rev.1, as orally revised.

I shall now give the floor to those representatives who wish to make statements in explanation of vote before the voting. May I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Peleg (Israel): It is one of the tragedies of nature that it is far, far easier to destroy than to build and that it takes far less effort to undermine than to support.

The draft resolution before the Assembly is the easy road, but it is a road that will take us nowhere. It is a road that our Arab colleagues have tried to travel for decades, and it has never brought them even one step closer to their destination.

But in recent years we have found a new road. It may be a less comfortable journey, but at least it is in the right direction. This road has already taken the two sides a considerable way. In the six short years since Israelis and Palestinians sat down face to face without intermediaries for the first time ever, the change in our relationship has been remarkable, even miraculous. But this road is hard. It is beset with difficulties and challenges, and now it brings us to the biggest challenge of all — the challenge of reaching agreement on the toughest and most inflammable issues — those of Jerusalem, settlements, borders and the other permanent status issues.

These negotiations will be at least as difficult as those which led to the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho, the redeployment in Hebron, the release of Palestinian prisoners and the establishment of the Palestinian Council. We cannot tell what will be the final outcome agreed by the two sides, but with 50 years of experience we can clearly tell what the approach to resolving this will not be. It will not be calls for economic measures that will undermine the principle of building economic ties as a key element in advancing the peace process. It will not be the threat of ostracizing Israel in the United Nations. It will not be the politicization of the instruments of humanitarian law and the organizations which implement them. And it will certainly not be the endless ritual of reports presenting a one-sided picture of the situation and providing a platform for any and every conceivable allegation against my country, the State of Israel.

Israel's quest for peace can be summed up in a single question: can we reach a peace for our children that will survive for our grandchildren? Our yearning for such a peace knows no bounds. It is a yearning that is strong enough to keep us striving for peace, even when the Palestinian covenant still calls for the destruction of Israel, even in the face of continued calls for jihad, or religious war, and even as we witness towns transferred to the Palestinian side in the quest for peace turned into places of refuge for terrorists and the burning of Israeli flags. It is strong enough to keep us at the negotiating table, waiting for our counterparts to return to complete arrangements for safe passage, a port and an airport and to begin to tackle the permanent status issues. It is strong enough to keep us on the hard road.

The influence of the international community gives it a heavy responsibility. It can be a force to help the two sides move forward and to encourage them as they struggle to surmount obstacles, or it can be a force for regression, sucking us back into the vicious cycle of hostile debate. This draft resolution is an invitation to go back in time to the darkest ages of the international community and of the United Nations. Supporting it is inconsistent with support for the only process that has brought any real benefit to the peoples of the region. It is all too easy to start the downward spiral of internationalization and extremism. Such a cycle will only gather momentum and unravel the hard work of the past six years.

I urge all Member States to stop this cycle now and to unite genuinely for peace by voting against the draft resolution.

Mr. Tello (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): First and foremost, the Government of Mexico wishes to affirm its support for the Middle East peace process begun in Madrid. We firmly believe that dialogue and the peaceful settlement of disputes are valuable methods that must prevail over confrontation and violence.

The issue before us today is not a new one on the agenda of the United Nations. In various bodies and at various times, our Organization has expressed its judgement, sometimes unanimously, through making recommendations or adopting provisions that, if they had been respected, would have made the road to peace less difficult and less complicated.

My delegation therefore regrets that, according to the Secretary-General's report, cooperation in the full implementation of adopted resolutions has met with resistance from one of the parties. In this context, we regret Israel's decision to continue with the construction of settlements in East Jerusalem. Unfortunately, the pursuit of these activities that run counter to international law and to Security Council resolutions, blocks the possibility of carrying the peace process forward. The entire international community has endorsed that process as the best formula for overcoming decades of sterile confrontation once and for all.

At the same time, Mexico wishes to reiterate once again its condemnation of acts of terrorism that take or threaten innocent lives and that can in no way be justified.

The draft resolution before us today contains elements that seem difficult, if not impossible, to apply. What is more, the General Assembly would be adopting recommendations that, strictly speaking, should be considered in other forums. I wish to affirm our conviction that one of the essential pillars of the peace process is the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territories by force. Mexico recognizes the political validity of the expression "land for peace" in the context of this process. However, once again, we would have liked to have more precise language formulating this as a legal principle.

My delegation also understands that nothing in this draft resolution should be interpreted as modifying, or attempting to modify, the inherent rights of any State Member of our Organization.

The Government of Mexico fervently desires the re-establishment of conditions to reactivate and speed up the peace process. We are convinced that the General Assembly can contribute to the attainment of this goal. The parties can and must respect the commitments entered into and do everything they can to achieve a firm and lasting peace.

For all these reasons, the Mexican delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution contained in document A/ES-10/L.2/Rev.1.

Mr. Gorelik (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): In the course of the discussion the Russian delegation has already detailed its position on the Israeli settlement activity in the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem.

Our position is that this is the main obstacle to the continuation of the peace process in the Middle East. We are decisively in favour of an immediate cessation of the construction of new settlements in East Jerusalem, which have increased tension in the region.

With regard to the draft resolution that has been introduced (A/ES-10/L.2/Rev. 1), we note that the sponsors have done a great deal of work to refine the text. The amendments introduced make the text a bit more balanced. At the same time, it could benefit from further work to make it more realistic. Paragraphs 6 and 7 do not exclude any measures, including sanctions.

There is a lack of clarity in the idea contained in paragraph 10 concerning the convening of a conference for the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. This question requires further refinement.

The Russian delegation was prepared for further constructive cooperation with the sponsors of the draft resolution for further work on the draft. However, when, in our view, there is haste to vote on the text — work on which could have been continued in the direction that we have outlined — the delegation of Russia, as a sponsor of the peace process, has no choice but to abstain.

Mr. Pérez-Otermin (Uruguay) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The matter before us today — the decision of the Israeli Government to build new settlements at Jebel Abu Ghneim — has been considered on three occasions by the General Assembly. The first time was in regular session and the next two in emergency special session. Uruguay's position has been steadfastly against that unilateral decision, considering it to be both *de jure* and de facto contradictory to the peace process initiated in Madrid some years ago.

On the first occasion the delegation of Uruguay came out in favour of the text adopted. On the second occasion we thought it prudent to abstain in order to give the parties involved the opportunity to continue the negotiations aimed at restoring a constructive dialogue and to demonstrate through actions and good faith their fulfilment of international obligations.

Today the delegation of Uruguay will once again support the draft resolution by voting in favour, as we feel that the decision to build the new settlements in question has not been rescinded. On the contrary, it has continued despite the opinion of the international community, as expressed in resolutions adopted by the United Nations, which we must accept for the sake of coexistence protected by international law.

Mr. Biørn Lian (Norway): Norway remains convinced that it is the obligation of the parties themselves to solve the present crisis in the Middle East peace process, and this can be done only in direct negotiations based on the Oslo agreements. We therefore urge the parties to resume as soon as possible the negotiations on outstanding issues of the Oslo II agreement and on final status negotiations.

However, Norway deeply regrets that Israel, as reported by the Secretary-General, has still not heeded the calls from the partners in peace and from the international community to halt its settlement activities in the Palestinian areas, including in East Jerusalem. These settlement activities are contrary to international law and to the spirit of the agreements reached between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Despite the reservations we have with respect to a number of elements in the text, and despite the reservations we have with regard to the holding of this emergency special session, which we do not consider to be conducive to progress in the peace process, Norway will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us.

Mr. Fowler (Canada): Canada will vote in favour of this draft resolution because it reflects in broad measure our concerns about the serious situation of the peace process and the particular importance which the construction of a new settlement in Jebel Abu

Ghneim/Har Homa has had in bringing us to this critical juncture.

We abstained in the voting on the previous resolution on this subject, and it is with regret that we find it necessary for the General Assembly to address this issue again, due to the absence of any positive developments in this matter during the intervening period. At the same time, we also regret that some paragraphs in this draft resolution contain elements which are imprecise or impractical or which have undesirable or unclear implications for the United Nations and for Member States.

Canada is a long-standing supporter of and an active participant in the peace process. Canada is therefore deeply concerned about the absence of any negotiations. We have often expressed our view that a just, comprehensive and lasting peace can be achieved only through direct negotiations and genuine dialogue between the parties. Canada does not recognize permanent Israeli control over the territories occupied in 1967 and opposes all unilateral actions intended to predetermine the outcome of negotiations, including the establishment of settlements. Canada believes that the status of Jerusalem can be resolved only as part of a general settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute and opposes Israel's unilateral annexation of East Jerusalem.

With regard to paragraphs 9 and 10, Canadian policy is that the Fourth Geneva Convention does apply to the territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including East Jerusalem. As a High Contracting Party to the Convention, our decision about the merits of convening the conference called for in paragraph 10 will be made after full examination of the utility and consequences of such a conference, as well as the cost implications and, of course, consultations with the other High Contracting Parties.

Canada believes that it is incumbent upon both Israelis and Palestinians to honour and implement in full the agreements which have been concluded. This includes, in our view, a determined effort by the Palestinian leadership to combat violence and terrorism.

Mrs. Osode (Liberia): Liberia will support draft resolution A/ES-10/L.2/Rev.1 but has to express its reservations on paragraphs which seem to suggest interference with Israel's membership in the United Nations in accordance with Chapter II, Articles 5 and 6 of the United Nations Charter.

As a country that has experienced tragic events in its recent history, Liberia longs and prays for genuine and lasting peace for itself and for others in a state of conflict.

Liberia agrees that Israel's actions in occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Palestinian territories are illegal and should be condemned, as we have consistently condemned all such illegal occupations elsewhere.

Liberia fully participated in the founding of the State of Israel as a nation in 1948, and will do nothing to acquiesce in the erosion of its sovereignty or in its destruction. And we feel we have the duty to insist that Israel fully comply, and that it cooperate with the international community and the Secretary-General and desist from all defiant actions. In the same vein, we have always been saddened by the plight of the Palestinian people and fully support their yearning for and their right to a State of their own, just like those of the 185 Member States represented at the United Nations. It is Liberia's fervent hope that this will become a reality in the very near future.

Until the international community is confident that the actions of the Security Council, the conscience of this House, and the General Assembly are impartial on these controversial and sensitive issues, cynics will continue to consider our collective efforts a façade. There will need to be meeting of the minds to bring about genuine and lasting peace in the region. And until Israel and its Arab neighbours are committed to negotiating in good faith, consider respect for and implementation of their agreements a priority, and abandon the policies of expansionism and terrorism once and for all time, peace will be only in the mind and on paper. We hereby urge that the peace process move forward, and that the momentum be actively pursued.

Mr. Tanç (Turkey): My delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution in view of the utmost importance we attach to the Middle East peace process as the sole valid method for achieving a just and durable solution to the Middle East problem, and for achieving peace, security and stability in the region and beyond.

We support the main thrust of the draft resolution before us. However, we are of the opinion that certain paragraphs are of an impractical nature and could have been formulated in a more constructive manner.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote before the voting.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/ES-10/L.2/Rev.1, as orally revised.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Albania, Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe

Against:

Israel, Micronesia (Federated States of), United States of America

Abstaining:

Andorra, Australia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Marshall Islands, Nicaragua, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Slovakia, Uzbekistan

Draft resolution A/ES-10/L.2/Rev.1, as orally revised, was adopted by 131 votes to 3, with 14 abstentions (resolution ES-10/3).

[Subsequently, the delegation of Bulgaria informed the Secretariat that it had intended to abstain.]

The President: Before giving the floor to the first speaker in explanation of vote, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Al-Attar (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from Arabic*): My delegation wishes to explain its position on paragraph 11 of the draft resolution just adopted. That paragraph does not refer to the principles and terms of reference of the Middle East peace process, which enjoy the full support of the entire international community. The peace process that began at Madrid in 1991 is founded on the principles of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978) and on the principle of land for peace. Nor does paragraph 11 demand that Israel fulfil agreed obligations and commitments, which is an essential element in injecting momentum into the stalled Middle East peace process. Israel is responsible for this impasse because of its practices, as rehearsed by participants in today's debate.

Mr. Owada (Japan): Japan, as a country that has been actively contributing to the Middle East peace process, is gravely concerned about the present situation in the Middle East. The peace process remains at a stalemate, despite constructive efforts by Egypt and other countries to break that stalemate. It is the considered view of the Government of Japan that the present unfortunate situation has its basic roots in the prevailing sense of frustration emanating from the aggravating developments that have taken place since the tragic death of Prime Minister Rabin of Israel, as symbolized by the construction by the Government of Israel of settlements at Jebel Abu Ghneim in East Jerusalem. We in the international community feel that the present situation will not improve unless this basic fact is recognized and taken into account by all the parties involved.

Guided by this fundamental position of principle, the Government of Japan gave the draft resolution before us its most careful consideration from the standpoint of how it would affect the prospects for the peace process, and

voted in favour of the draft resolution. At the same time, I wish to place on record the view of my delegation that the statement contained in the revision made orally minutes ago by the representative of Indonesia — adding "as these activities contravene international law" at the end of paragraph 6 of the text — may contain some imprecision and may lead to some ambiguities strictly from the juridical point of view, and I emphasize that I am speaking strictly from the juridical point of view.

Japan is extremely concerned about the present situation in the Middle East peace process. I should like to take this opportunity to appeal again, in the strongest terms possible, to the leaders of both Israel and the Palestinians that they get the Middle East peace process back on track.

Mr. Kayinamura (Rwanda): The Rwanda delegation regrets that the peace process in the Middle East continues to meet serious obstacles, to the detriment of all concerned. The refusal of Israel to stop further construction of new settlements in Jebel Abu Ghneim does not augur well for peace in the region. Attempts to change the demographic parametres of the population in East Jerusalem are not likely to contribute to peace, stability or the security of the Israeli and the Palestinian peoples.

Our delegation would like to stress that the resolution of the conflict between the Israeli Government and Palestine can best be found in the reinforcement of and support for confidence-building efforts by the international community, which would induce the resumption of the peace process. In the circumstances, neither the Har Homa project nor the condemnation could seem to be conducive to bringing together the two parties at the negotiating table.

My delegation would have liked to vote in favour of a conducive resolution that would have inspired both parties to resume direct talks leading to the final settlement of the plight of the Palestinian people. In the absence of such a resolution, my Government was left with no choice but to abstain in the voting.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote.

The Observer of Palestine has asked for the floor. In accordance with General Assembly resolutions 3237 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974 and 43/177 of 15 December 1988, I now call on the Observer of Palestine.

Mr. Al-Kidwa (Palestine) (*interpretation from Arabic*): On behalf of the Palestinian people and leadership and the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine to the United Nations, I wish to express our sincere thanks and deep appreciation to the States sponsors of resolution ES-10/3, which was just adopted by an overwhelming majority, and to all those that supported it. We are well aware that this positive position, at least on the part of some States that voted in favour of the resolution, was not an easy one to take. We appreciate that deeply.

The international community has spoken clearly today. We hope that the party concerned will respond to the will of the international community. We also wish to reaffirm the importance of the task ahead of us all of implementing this important resolution in its chronological framework.

We convey our thanks and appreciation to the General Assembly.

The President: The tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly is now temporarily adjourned, in accordance with the terms of paragraph 13 of the resolution adopted at the present meeting.

The meeting rose at 6.25.